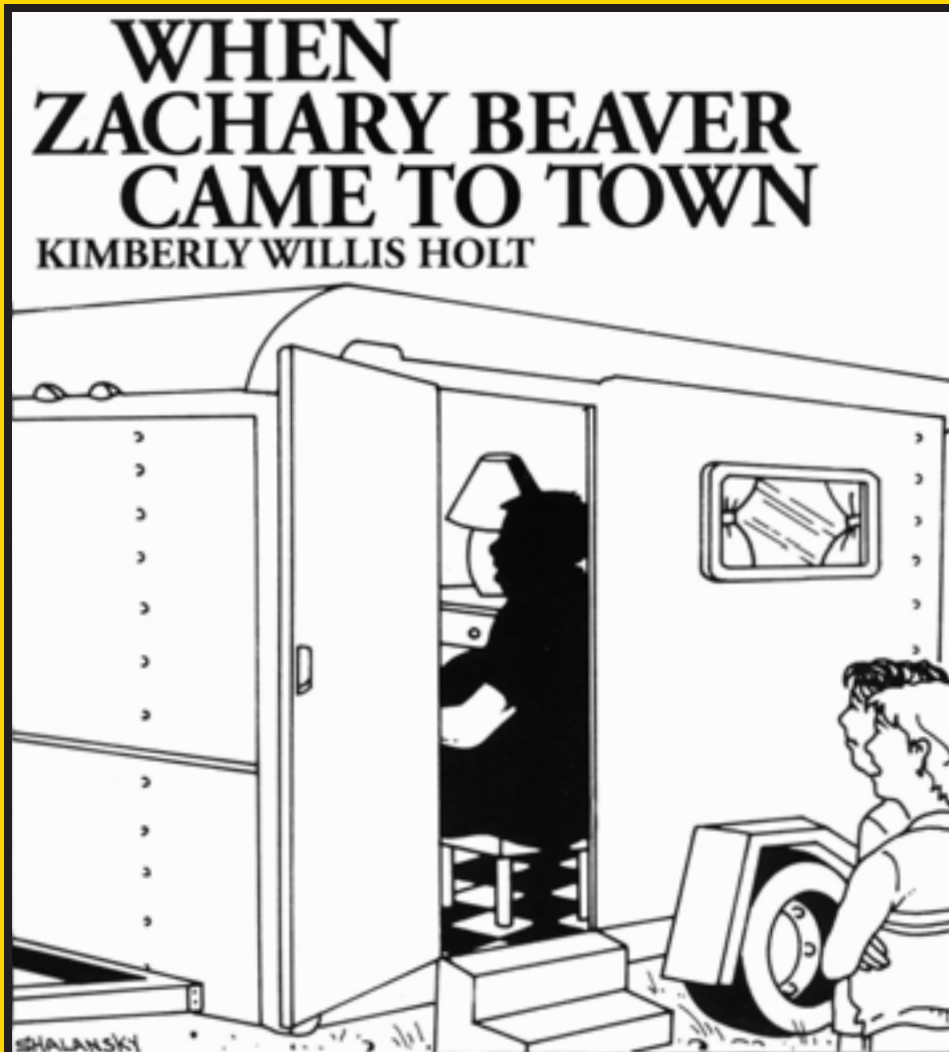


# Novel·Ties



## A Study Guide

Written By Carol Alexander

Edited by Joyce Friedland and Rikki Kessler

**LEARNING LINKS**

P.O. Box 326 • Cranbury • New Jersey 08512

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Synopsis . . . . .	1
Background Information . . . . .	2
Pre-Reading Activities . . . . .	3
Chapters 1 - 4 . . . . .	4 - 6
Chapters 5 - 8 . . . . .	7 - 9
Chapters 9 - 12 . . . . .	10 - 12
Chapters 13 - 16 . . . . .	13 - 14
Chapters 17 - 19 . . . . .	15 - 18
Chapters 20 - 22 . . . . .	17 - 19
Cloze Activity . . . . .	20
Post-Reading Activities . . . . .	21
Suggestions For Further Reading . . . . .	22
Answer Key . . . . .	23 - 25

*Novel-Ties® are printed on recycled paper.*

---

*The purchase of this study guide entitles an individual teacher to reproduce pages for use in a classroom. Reproduction for use in an entire school or school system or for commercial use is prohibited. Beyond the classroom use by an individual teacher, reproduction, transmittal or retrieval of this work is prohibited without written permission from the publisher.*

## For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide consists of instructional material to use in conjunction with a specific novel. Written in chapter-by-chapter format, the guide contains a synopsis, pre-reading activities, vocabulary and comprehension exercises, as well as extension activities to be used as follow-up to the novel.

NOVEL-TIES are either for whole class instruction using a single title or for group instruction where each group uses a different novel appropriate to its reading level. Depending upon the amount of time allotted to it in the classroom, each novel, with its guide and accompanying lessons, may be completed in two to four weeks.

The first step in using NOVEL-TIES is to distribute to each student a copy of the novel and a folder containing all of the duplicated worksheets. Begin instruction by selecting several pre-reading activities in order to set the stage for the reading ahead. Vocabulary exercises for each chapter always precede the reading so that new words will be reinforced in the context of the book. Use the questions on the chapter worksheets for class discussion or as written exercises.

The benefits of using NOVEL-TIES are numerous. Students read good literature in the original, rather than in abridged or edited form. The good reading habits formed by practice in focusing on interpretive comprehension and literary techniques will be transferred to the books students read independently. Passive readers become active, avid readers.

## PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

1. Preview the book by reading the title and the author's name and by looking at the illustration on the cover. What do you think this story will be about? Where do you think it takes place? Have you read another book by the same author?
2. The Vietnam War changed the lives of many Americans. Read the Background Information on page two of this study guide and do some additional research to learn more about how Americans in the 1960s and 1970s felt about American involvement in this war. As you read this book notice how the Vietnam War affects many of the major characters.
3. Have you read any other books set in the United States during the Vietnam era? How did that war affect the characters in the book? What did you discover about American society in those decades?
4. Do some research to learn about the history of carnivals and “freak” shows. With your classmates discuss the conditions that have given rise to the display of unusual people or animals as entertainment. Why do people participate in such shows? How do you feel about this form of amusement?
5. Have you ever complained that your community is a boring place in which to live? Why does life seem monotonous? Is it because nothing happens or that you do not appreciate what is happening? Discuss these issues with a classmate to determine whether you both perceive the same place in the same way. As you read the book, determine whether Antler, Texas was a boring place to live or if Toby, the main character just saw it that way.
6. The sound and atmosphere of country music often seems to be the background music for this story, as reference is made to Toby's mother, an aspiring country music star. Obtain some recordings of Tammy Wynette or Patsy Kline and play them for your classmates.

## Chapters 1 – 4 (cont.)

### Questions:

1. Why didn't Toby want his mother to win the National Amateurs' Country Music Competition?
2. What did Scarlett Stalling's actions reveal about her character? Why did Toby's mother warn him about her?
3. Why did Toby agree to watch Scarlett's little sister Tara?
4. Why did Toby envy Cal for having a brother like Wayne?
5. Why was the arrival of Zachary Beaver in Antler such an important event?
6. How did Toby and Cal differ in their responses to Zachary?
7. Why had the population of Antler declined? What effect did this have on the town as a whole?
8. Why did Toby and Cal peek into the trailer?

### Questions for Discussion:

1. Do you think Toby was justified in being resentful of his mother's career goals?
2. How do you think the townspeople felt about the singing contest?
3. What do you suppose Toby would change about his life if he had the power to do so?
4. Do you live in a town like Antler? Do you think it is a good place to grow up?
5. What do you think might happen to Zachary?

### Literary Devices:

- I. *Simile*—A simile is a figure of speech in which two unlike objects are compared using the words “like” or “as.” For example:

...wrinkles fold into her [Miss Myrtie Mae's] face like an unironed shirt.

What is being compared?

---

How does this help you picture Miss Myrtie Mae?

---

---